**June 2016 The Compassionate Friends Volume 30● Number 6**

***THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS***

**P. O. Box 50833 • Nashville, TN 37205 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823) •Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.org**

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The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief

following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

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*Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month in the American Builders & Contractors (ABC) Building, 1604 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210 . Park and enter at the rear of the building.*

*We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.*

**June 12 Meeting:**

**Phone Friends**

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can’t reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

**Accidental Death** ………...Mike and Paula Childers

615-646-1333

**AIDS**………………….….…….….......Joyce Soward

615-754-5210

**Illness**………….…………..David and Peggy Gibson

615-356-1351

**Infant**…………………..……………..…Jayne Head

615-264-8184

**SIDS**………….…………..…….……KrisThompson

931-486-9088

**Suicide**…….……………….Ron and Darlene Henson

615-789-3613

**Small Child**….……........Kenneth and Kathy Hensley

615-237-9972

**Alcohol/Drug Overdose**......…...............……Ed Pyle

615-712-3245

***Balloon Release and Picnic***

***Note New Location: American Legion Pavilion***

O

ur June gathering is a very special time—our

Annual Balloon Release and Picnic. At 3:00 p.m. we

will meet at a new location this year: American Legion Pavilion, 2864 Elm Hill Pike, 37214, just 3.3 miles beyond our regular meeting location.

This is a very popular event each year and we invite you to bring your family members. All ages are invited to come to remember and celebrate the life of your child.

*Please see details on page 4.*

You once did something for me

More meaningful than the greatest deeds:

You held me in your arms and let me cry.

Bonnie Jison

TCF, Topeka, KS

A

ttending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group, offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents.

*We Need Not Walk Alone.*

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National Office P. O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696—Phone 630 990-0010 or Toll free: 1-877 969-0010

TCF Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) National Office email:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

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**All-Outdoor Balloon Release and Picnic: June 12**

**New Location: American Legion Pavilion**

*The afternoon of June 12, 2016 marks the date of our regular annual*

*balloon release and picnic in memory of our children.*

*New Location:* ***American Legion Pavilion, 2864 Elm Hill Pike, 37214*** *(Plenty of parking)*

The Pavilion is about one and a half blocks east of Donelson Pike,

just 3.3 miles east of our regular meeting location at 1604 Elm Hill Pike.

Plan to arrive before 3:00 PM. Family members of all ages and friends are invited to participate. Each person will be given a bio-degradable helium-filled balloon to which you may attach a handwritten message (paper will be provided.) Following a few moments of remembrance, the balloons will be released. It is really quite beautiful as they drift away together. The group will then gather for barbecue and covered dish picnic under the pavilion. This is a moving ceremony as well as a time to get to know one another better.

Each family is asked to bring a dish large enough to serve eight, according to the starting letter of your last name, as follows:

**A-G: Dessert or chips**

**H-M: A main dish, other than barbeque (Chapter members will be providing barbecue.)**

**N-Z: Cole slaw, baked beans, salad or other side dish**

Soft drinks and paper goods will be provided by the chapter. Picnic tables are under a large shelter in case of a shower. Plan to bring lawn chairs or a blanket if you wish, and outdoor games. Restroom facilities are nearby. Please dress for the weather and plan to stay as long as you like. We hope to see you there!



**TCF Nashville Co-leader Named Volunteer of the Year**

W

e are pleased and very proud to announce that our chapter co-leader, Barbara Davies, an employee of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company, has been awarded the Nationwide Annual Volunteer of the Year Award for 2016. She was selected from a panel of 80 candidates.

This award not only honors Barbara for her dedicated work with TCF, but it includes a very generous donation to the Nashville Chapter of TCF. Nationwide will also be a sponsor of our TCF National Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona in July.

Congratulations, Barbara!

**“The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known**

**suffering, known struggle, known loss, and found their way out of the depths. These people have**

**an appreciation, sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion,**

**gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.”**

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

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**Dads and Daughters**

M

y mother died when I was seven, so a special bond grew between my father and me. During those next years, it was he who ironed his little girl’s school dresses each night, he was the one who would say, “look it up” when I asked a question, or “you try first,” when I wanted a word spelled. He was there for me when boyfriend troubles brought the tears, and then later, for my wedding, he lovingly decorated our home with ivy from our yard.

One day, several years after that, he called from his retirement home in Florida just to chat. Our three little girls scampered around me, creating a background chorus both distracting and dear. As we were saying our goodbyes, my dad commented, “Darling, you don’t know how much I love you.” I looked at our children and replied, “Yes, Daddy, finally I do know—now that I have children of my own.” Two weeks later that dear man’s heart stopped, and he was gone.

Although that conversation came back to me many times in the ensuing years, never so poignantly as when our oldest daughter died fourteen years later. Oh, yes, Daddy, I do know how much you loved me!

For twenty-three years, I watched my husband work long hours to provide financial security for his offspring, and then come home to play with them, answer a million questions, teach them, by example, to love and do for others, and dole out daily portions of hugs and kisses. When he built a go-cart, they had great fun on it; he took them to find fossils in an old dry quarry, helped them search out pottery shards at a recently discovered Indian ruin, went sledding with them, and generally stimulated them to be open to the adventures of life.

It takes a great deal of strength for parents to continue working during times of stress. He was no exception. During our daughter’s terminal illness, he would come to the hospital before work to say good morning and fortify me with coffee. During the day, he’d stop in again, often bearing a little surprise for her, and then after work, he’d bring my dinner from a restaurant in order for me to remain with her full time. Mid-evening, when most folks were settling down to relax, he and our youngest daughter would return home to do laundry and take care of nightly household chores.

When our sweet girl died, he attended to the myriad details with typical devotion, easing the way for the rest of us. I don’t know how he did it all. Even if his tears had not mingled with mine, I’d still be aware that his pain matched mine; and, as with my own father, of how much he loves his children.

Oh, yes, I do know. Peggy Gibson

TCF, Nashville, TN

***Touched By Gold***

*I was thinking how different life is for me*

*And about the things that will never be*

*To watch you grow into that fine young man*

*For me is now not part of the plan*

*I realize my life will never be the same*

*Even though I carry on with life’s little game*

*I can’t go back to where I was before*

*That part of my life is now a closed door*

*But in spite of the pain I must endure*

*I want you to know one thing for sure*

*I wouldn’t trade places with any other on earth*

One of the many mixed feelings a father will have on Father’s Day will be one of failure—failure as a protector of his child who has died. The roles of protector and father are synonymous. The father’s duty is both to love and to protect that child from harm. A man may intellectually know he did his best, but the child, his charge, is still painfully absent on this Father’s Day.

Dick Moen

TCF, Indianapolis, IN

*And I’m proud to be the one who gave you birth*

*I live with tragedy and sorrow, that’s true*

*But also a great love have I shared with you*

*For you’ve touched my heart as no other could*

*And in your memory there will come some good*

*For you’ve left a purpose for your Mom and Dad*

*To let others know of the son we had*

*I want you to know your story will be told*

*And others will know I’ve been touched by gold.*

Carolyn Bryan

TCF, Orange Park/Jacksonville, FL

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he Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Scottsdale, Arizona, will be the site of the 39th TCF National Conference on July 8-10, 2016. "Hope Rises on the Wings of Love" is the theme of this year's event which promises a great National Conference experience. The 2016 Conference will be held at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess. Details and registration can be accessed on the national website, www.compassionatefriends.org, as well as on the TCF/USA Facebook Page. Adult Registration (ages 18 +) $90.00 each*,* Child Registration (ages 9-17) $40.00 each.

Limited reimbursement funds are available for some first-time TCF Nashville attendees. Please contact our Chapter Leaders, Roy and Barbara Davies, [tcfroyandbarbara@yahoo.com](mailto:tcfroyandbarbara@yahoo.com) for more information.

*Plan to be part of this heartwarming experience.*

# Coping With Memories

M

emories are a bridge between the past and present. In an abstract, though nonetheless real sense, you can reach your child, be with him or her, by crossing the bridge, remembering, but herein lies the pain—you have to go back to the past because he or she is not physically present.

The memories that you have of your child, whether of happy or unhappy times, or perhaps of how he or she looked, felt, sounded—all of these are precious, special, and sometimes can be so painful that you want to block them to escape the anguish. This is normal, natural. And yet, the loss of your memories would leave a large gap. Perhaps the most difficult to deal with are the sudden, unexpected stabs that can occur at any time.

When an association with your child comes out of the blue—perhaps a piece of music or a can of spaghetti in the supermarket—whatever it is that throws you, try to remember to breathe deeply and slowly, and it will help. Remembering is important because even when it is painful, healing is taking place.

# Jenny Kander

Johannesburg, S.A.

*We must learn to let go as easily as we grasp*

*or we will find our hands full and our minds empty.*

Leo Buscaglia

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**CHAPTER INFORMATION**

**The “Children Remembered” Listings**

If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed on pages 2 and 3 in The Children Remembered

list, please let us know, printing the exact way you’d like the child’s name to appear, the child’s birth and death dates, and the

parents’ names as they should be listed. You may call the database manager at 615 356-1351, drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at davidg14@bellsouth.net. We’ll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once,

unless any of your information changes.

**Picture Name Tags**

If you will bring a clear picture of your child, wallet size or larger, to a TCF meeting, Lamar Bradley will make a beautiful permanent name tag with your child’s picture on it for you to use each month. You will also have an opportunity to select your own butterfly to accompany the photograph. The original photo will be completely safe with Lamar and will be returned to you at the following meeting. The best part of this is that there is no charge.A big thank you goes to Lamar for unselfishly giving his time and talent.

**We Need Your Help**

If you know a family outside the immediate Nashville area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you have access to the address (and phone number) of the parents, it would be most helpful if you would call us with that information. Our mission is to reach every bereaved family in Middle Tennessee, but we have to know about them in order to give them the support we ourselves have received. If you know the child’s name, birth date, date of death and cause of death, so much the better. Our outreach chairperson will send a warm letter of sympathy and information about TCF along with appropriate brochures and articles. There will be no demands made upon the parents, and the information you provide is strictly confidential.

**TCF Nashville Sibling Support**

We encourage siblings from teens to adults to come support one another at our monthly chapter meetings. Siblings face a unique and complicated grief journey and are finding hope and healing through our sharing groups.

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**BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES**

**Alive Alone**

Alive Alone is an organization to benefit parents whose only child or all children have died. Visit their website at [www.alivealone.org](http://www.alivealone.org).

**Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents**

For general information about Grief Support Services at Alive Hospice, please call the main number: [615 963-4732](tel:615%20963-4732) or email [griefsupport@alivehospice.org](mailto:griefsupport@alivehospice.org). Diane Castellano, LCSW is a grief counselor there for children and their families. Call her at 615-346-8554. Contact John Baker at 615-346-8364 for a bereaved parent support group or individual counseling.

**Sharing**

SHARING is a community organization interested in helping parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. Call 615 342-8899 to confirm dates and times of meetings. See www.nationalshare.org

**Survivors of Suicide**

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call 615 244-7444, or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

**TCF Web site —A Treasure for You**

When you log onto the TCF Web site at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) you will find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter Web sites and numerous other resources.

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***The Solitude of Grief***

*There are wounds one can't assuage  
For the cut is deep and bleeding  
Some wounds show no outward trace  
For it's the heart that's sore and needing*

*How does one cope with a broken heart  
A heart that's cold and lonely  
From where the strength to carry on  
From a grief that's shared . . . but yours only*

*Still in dreams we see them yet  
So young, so fair so alive  
I don't know how we cope with death  
But somehow – somehow we do survive*

*Always a part of this heart of mine  
Now tossed like a windblown leaf  
And I imprisoned in a world not mine  
In the solitude of grief*

Harvey Hockstein  
TCF Morris Area, NJ

an04235_

***My Compassionate Friend***

*I look into your eyes and I see my pain.*

*I touch your shoulder and I feel my grief.*

*I hear your laughter and*

*I know the ache underneath.*

*Although I wish our paths would have crossed*

*For a different reason,*

*Your presence and understanding*

*Have become a strength to me—*

*The sad but comforting knowledge*

*That I am not alone. You are my friend.*

Deborah Wiseman

***Separation***

*From where I stand*

*I cannot see*

*How far it is*

*From you to me.*

*At different times*

*It seems to be*

*A step or an infinity.*

From *Rachel’s Cry*

Richard Dew, TCF, Knoxville TN

TCF, Nashville, TN

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